

Prune (Dried Plum) Situation in Selected Countries

Total prune production is estimated to reach 260,581 tons in 2000/01, up 24 percent from the previous year. The United States, the largest prune producer in the world, is estimating a large prune crop of 199,581 tons for 2000/01, while France and Chile are expecting prune production to rise to more normal levels. Total prune exports, however, are estimated to rise by only 3 percent in 2000/01, mostly as a result of flat international demand for prunes.

United States

Prune production for 2000/01 (August 2000 to July 2001) is estimated at 199,581 tons, the second largest on record and up 23 percent from the previous year. Initial forecasts by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in June 2000 called for a smaller prune crop of 181,436 tons, but favorable weather has resulted in yields of 2.2 tons per acre compared to 1.9 tons per acre the previous year. While a large U.S. prune crop is estimated for 2000/01, high labor and energy costs may prompt California growers to leave smaller prunes in the fields, especially given the high cost of electricity needed to dry the prunes and the low price growers receive for them. Prune exports are estimated to reach 66,500 tons, up only 2 percent from the previous year. Exports may be higher if demand for prunes increases in overseas markets and if U.S. grower prices for prunes decline from last year's high price of \$809 per ton.

In 1999/2000, U.S. prune production reached 161,479 tons, most of which was in manufacturing sizes and could not be exported as consumer packs. Consequently, exports declined by 9 percent in 1999/2000. Exports to Japan, the largest consumer of U.S. prunes, declined by 19 percent in 1999/2000 to 16,046 tons. Other major markets include Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada and Hong Kong. U.S. prune exports to Hong Kong increased by 216 percent to reach 2,328 tons. It is estimated that 70 percent of prune exports to Hong Kong are transported to mainland China. Prune imports for 2000/01 are expected to remain unchanged from 1999/2000.

France

Prune production in 2000/01 (September 2000 to August 2001) is estimated up 41 percent to 41,000 tons, from the abnormally small 1999/2000 crop. Although production is expected to increase significantly in 2000/01, it is still likely to be below the 52,000-55,000 ton potential. France is the world's second largest prune producer after the United States.

French prune exports in 2000/01 are expected to reach 18,000 tons, up 18 percent from last year, as a result of the larger crop. The small 1999/2000 prune crop led to a 27-percent decline in prune exports last year to 15,255 tons. Despite the decline in exports last year, prune stocks declined from 23,200 tons in August 1999 to 12,000 tons in August 2000.

Chile

Prune production in 2000/01 (January 2000 to December 2000) is estimated at 20,000 tons, up 5 percent from the previous year. Industry sources have indicated that good economic results obtained by most producers during the last few years have encouraged many farmers to plant additional orchards or replace older, low producing trees.

Chile's prune exports are estimated to reach 19,000 tons in 2000/01, down 5 percent from the previous year. Chile's prunes are ready for shipment from the end of April through November. Major markets for Chile's prunes in 1999/2000 included Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Germany and Peru.

(The FAS Attache Report search engine contains reports on the Dried Fruit industries for 8 countries, including South Africa, Turkey and Australia. For information on production and trade, contact Karina Ramos at 202-720-6877. For information on marketing contact Kelly Strzelecki at 202-690-1341)

Prunes: Production, Supply and Distribution
Marketing Years 1997/98 - 2000/01

Country/Marketing Year 1/	Beginning Stocks	Production	Imports	Exports	Domestic Consumption	Ending Stocks
Metric Tons						
Chile						
1997/98	5,774	17,800	0	18,840	1,170	3,564
1998/99	3,564	21,500	0	21,340	1,170	2,554
1999/2000	2,554	19,000	0	20,000	1,170	384
2000/01	384	20,000	0	19,000	1,170	214
France						
1997/98	43,180	28,500	351	22,754	25,137	24,140
1998/99	24,140	44,790	300	20,987	25,043	23,200
1999/2000	23,200	29,000	1,954	15,255	26,899	12,000
2000/01	12,000	41,000	1,000	18,000	25,000	11,000
United States						
1997/98	97,527	194,138	200	70,150	101,233	120,482
1998/99	120,482	97,976	638	71,193	90,803	57,100
1999/2000	57,100	161,479	469	65,074	91,933	62,041
2000/01	62,041	199,581	420	66,500	101,542	94,000
Total						
1997/98	146,481	240,438	551	111,744	127,540	148,186
1998/99	148,186	164,266	938	113,520	117,016	82,854
1999/2000	82,854	209,479	2,423	100,329	120,002	74,425
2000/01	74,425	260,581	1,420	103,500	127,712	105,214

1/ Marketing Years begin August in the United States, September in France and January in Chile
Sources: U.S. Agricultural Attache Reports, USDA/NASS estimates, Industry data and
U.S. Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Prune Exports
Marketing Years 1996/97 - 2000/01

Country	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	Aug. - Nov 1999/2000	Aug. - Nov 2000/01
Metric Tons						
North America						
Canada	4,246	4,175	4,369	4,754	1,519	1,449
Mexico	1,091	1,276	794	993	444	491
Sub-total	5,337	5,451	5,163	5,747	1,963	1,940
European Union						
Germany	10,237	11,139	9,878	9,601	2,762	5,149
Italy	5,676	6,489	5,592	5,770	1,806	2,221
United Kingdom	5,473	4,794	6,957	5,563	1,320	2,018
Netherlands	1,959	1,451	4,097	1,713	862	665
Denmark	1,614	1,613	1,499	1,657	945	1,001
Belgium-Luxembourg	286	205	399	1,478	21	1,688
Finland	1,768	1,739	1,393	1,167	840	1,184
Sweden	1,812	1,784	1,467	1,111	512	460
Other	1,839	1,817	1,414	1,279	587	1,503
Sub-total	30,664	31,031	32,696	29,339	9,655	15,889
Asia						
Japan	14,980	20,162	19,705	16,046	5,187	4,355
Hong Kong	1,154	754	736	2,328	734	1,275
Singapore	3,292	1,949	1,514	1,379	526	487
Taiwan	891	876	1,701	1,040	319	139
Other	455	194	903	955	442	405
Sub-total	20,772	23,935	24,559	21,748	7,208	6,661
Other Countries						
Australia	821	730	957	1,320	354	440
Poland	951	1,057	1,337	1,206	575	186
New Zealand	716	631	945	980	273	341
Norway	1103	1006	1103	953	521	550
Israel	1082	1132	1261	893	53	267
Other	5,602	5,180	3,170	2,886	1,102	1,437
Sub-total	10,275	9,736	8,773	8,238	2,878	3,221
Grand Total	67,051	70,150	71,193	65,074	21,708	27,706

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

U.S. Prune Imports
Marketing Years 1996/97 - 2000/01

					Aug. - Nov	Aug. - Nov
Country	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	1999/2000	2000/01
			Metric Tons			
Argentina	0	15	402	182	74	120
Taiwan	137	76	84	121	35	45
China	103	43	65	86	37	20
Mexico	0	0	20	37	18	1
France	34	2	3	22	22	0
Turkey	63	5	7	19	6	9
Other	127	60	58	3	0	6
Grand Total	464	200	638	469	192	200

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census